

do things that will benefit the real American people, not pointy-head economists and not Wall Street.

#### ACORN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to again call attention to the group Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now, or ACORN. As Congress proceeds later this week with appropriations, we must be mindful of the risk of allowing this group's funding to be restored.

ACORN's funding was stripped last month, thanks to quick action on the part of some of my colleagues here in the House. However, if we do not ensure that that funding is permanently eliminated, ACORN could again resume their questionable activities, subsidized by the American taxpayer.

Recently, 11 former ACORN employees were arrested for suspicion of voter registration fraud. In the past several weeks, more than five videos have been released to the media showing ACORN employees advising individuals of methods to illegally evade taxes by masking prostitution under an IRS code, among other questionable things.

We have no way of knowing if these were isolated instances or basic procedure, but I've heard from many Kansans who have voiced their displeasure with ACORN. They demand that ACORN be investigated, possibly criminally, as well as completely defunded, and I agree with those Kansans.

I recently wrote a letter demanding an investigation by the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. In the enclosed letter, I cited ACORN's unresolved issues with past elections and the recently released videos as evidence to block any further funding.

While ACORN has launched an internal investigation and fired offending employees, this string of events sheds light on the lack of institutional control within ACORN's management ranks. This is a perfect example of misappropriation of taxpayer dollars.

The American people should not be expected to subsidize ACORN's activities. That is why I called for this investigation in the beginning of September, and that's why I again call for an investigation now, a month and a half later. Congress must look at its own procedures when it comes to allocating money with little or no accountability.

Congress has been complacent with the money entrusted to us by the taxpayers. The House of Representatives owes an explanation as to why ACORN has been deemed fit to receive any Federal assistance. Congress has the opportunity to deny Federal funds to ACORN when we consider legislation later this week. It is necessary to deny those funds now and in the future until ACORN can dispel its long history of

questionable practices. I cannot foresee a scenario where it would be appropriate to reinstate ACORN funding. Their previous track record, coupled with their stonewalling of legislative efforts to review them, gives me the impression that they are unwilling or, even worse, unable to play by the rules.

Let's end this corruption and stop wasting the money.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### HEALTH CARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Maryland (Ms. EDWARDS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, we are closer than ever to achieving health care reform for the American people. I think it's really important for us to step back and examine the reasons that we want health care reform.

Every day, every year premiums for Americans are going higher and higher, deductibles and copays higher and higher. Millions of people without health insurance, some 47 million people without health insurance, 14,000 people a day who lose their health care coverage. It's really unthinkable. And here we have an opportunity to do something that's very special and right for the American people.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I haven't been in this Congress for six decades, but I do know that the idea of health care reform has risen and fallen for six decades. So it's time for us to make the kind of changes the American people thought they bought onto in November 2008. We are closer than ever to achieving that kind of comprehensive reform. We need to take a look at why we want reform.

The American people want reform because they want to lower their health care costs. They know the cost of their premiums. It's not affordable for their families. Americans want health care reform because it's not fair that millions go without health insurance and many millions more are in danger of losing their health insurance. Our small businesses are struggling each and every day. They want to provide health care for their employees, but they just can't because they can't operate with a profit margin and provide quality, affordable, and accessible health care for their employees.

So I am really struggling here with why my friends on the other side of the aisle have so resisted reform. I don't really believe that it's because they're such allies with the health insurance industry. I don't really believe it's be-

cause they're more driven by what works for the private market than what works for the American people, but I have to believe that all of us can get on one page about what's right for the American people.

□ 1430

So, as we move into these days following many town hall meetings and meetings at senior centers with our seniors, as we talk to young people about the need for reform and as we meet with our business leaders, it's time for some real decision-making. If it's not going to come from my friends on the other side of the aisle, then the leadership and that decision-making has to come from Democrats. It doesn't matter to me, frankly, about one election or another, because it's about doing what's right for the American people.

Now, I, along with hundreds of others of my colleagues, happen to believe that a robust public health option is important for the American people. I guess the question is: How many more are going to step up and have the courage to do the right thing? How many more are going to step up and say, You know what? Not only do we want to eliminate preexisting conditions and strengthen insurance provisions for everyone, but we want to lower costs, we want to create competition, and we want to make sure that there is real accountability in the system.

Now, earlier this month, we had an opportunity to see the insurance companies and insurance industry completely unmasked. I mean their goals are very clear to the American people. Their goals are about maintaining the status quo because it works for them. Their goals are about maintaining the status quo because it satisfies their profit margins, and it satisfies their shareholders. The problem with that is that it doesn't satisfy the American people. So I'm ready to act.

I know that, from the year 2000 until 2006, the Republicans controlled both chambers of the Congress and the White House, and yet we didn't do health care reform. So the opportunity for those of us in the majority today is actually to do the right thing by the American people. I'm excited about that. I know the American people are excited about it.

If you look at the polls, and although polls may not be everything, they do give us a picture of where the American people are and of how they've moved. What those polls suggest is that, despite being beaten up and beaten up for months and weeks at a time, the public option has survived. The reason that it has is that I believe, like many of my colleagues, that the American people are smart. They get it. They understand what health insurance means to them.

They know that, for children who are coming out of college and who are ready to strike out on their own, those children are no longer on their parents'